**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**:

**1. (Currently Amended)** A labelling plant for ~~a container~~containers having a ~~rim or~~ collar, comprising:

a longitudinally extending stationary device for directly supporting from above at least two containers held together by means that attach to a collar on each said container, ~~and transporting at least one container~~ which is suspended in an erect position ~~acting from above on the container,~~;

means for slidably moving said at least two containers along said longitudinally extending stationary device;

means for mounting at the same time a heat-shrinkable annular band onto each of said at least two containers ~~container~~ acting from below the containers~~,~~;

means for causing said annular ~~band~~ bands to adhere to said ~~container~~ containers by heat-shrinkage~~,~~;

wherein said means for mounting a heat-shrinkable annular band onto each of said ~~container~~ containers comprise at least one vertically movable support plate to transport the annular ~~band~~ bands which are disposed vertically~~,~~; and

the means for causing each of the annular ~~band~~ bands to adhere by heat-shrinkage ~~are~~ is supported on said support plate.

**2. (Currently Amended)** A plant as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for causing the heat-shrinkable annular ~~band~~ bands to adhere by heat-shrinkage comprises a system for delivering a hot fluid.

**3. (Previously Presented)** A plant as claimed in claim 2, wherein said hot fluid is steam.

**4. (Cancelled)**

**5. (Currently Amended)** A plant as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for causing the heat-shrinkable annular ~~band~~ bands to adhere to the ~~container~~ containers comprise a plurality of hot fluid dispensing nozzles supported on the vertically movable support plate.

**6. (Previously Presented)** A plant as claimed in claim 1, wherein said vertically movable support plate comprises a unit for maintaining the heat-shrinkable annular band vertical.

**7. (Previously Presented)** A plant as claimed in claim 6, wherein said unit for maintaining the heat-shrinkable annular band vertical comprises vertical rods branching from a second plate connected to the vertically movable support plate by virtue of at least one cylinder-piston unit.

**8. (Previously Presented)** A plant as claimed in claim 7, wherein said vertical rods are disposed on the perimeter of an imaginary circumference to maintain the heat-shrinkable annular band widened while it is mounted onto the container.

**9. (Previously Presented)** A plant as claimed in claim 7 wherein said vertical rods are inserted through corresponding matching holes present in the vertically movable support plate and pass beyond said plate to externally receive the heat-shrinkable annular band.

**10. (Cancelled)**

**11. (Previously Presented)** An apparatus for labelling at least one container having a rim or collar, said apparatus comprising:

a support positioned above said at least one container and configured to support and transport said at least one container in a suspended erect position;

a mounting device configured to mount a vertically disposed heat-shrinkable annular band onto said at least one container from below;

a heater for adhering said heat-shrinkable annular band to said at least one container by heat-shrinkage; and

at least one vertically movable support plate that is attached to and supports both the mounting device and the heater.

**12. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said at least one vertically movable support plate is configured to vertically transport said heat-shrinkable annular band onto said at least one container.

**13. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said heater is configured to deliver a hot fluid to adhere said heat-shrinkable annular band to said at least one container.

**14. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said hot fluid is steam.

**15. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said heater comprises a plurality of hot fluid dispensing nozzles supported on said at least one vertically movable support plate.

**16. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said at least one vertically movable support plate comprises at least one unit configured to maintain said heat-shrinkable annular band in a vertical position.

**17. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said at least one unit comprises one or more vertical rods branching from a second plate connected to the at least one vertically movable support plate by way of at least one cylinder-piston unit.

**18. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said one or more vertical rods are equally spaced apart and form the perimeter of a circumference, the centre of which passes through the vertical axis of each said at least one container, to maintain said heat-shrinkable annular band in a widened position when being mounted onto said at least one container.

**19. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said one or more vertical rods are inserted through corresponding matching holes present in the vertically movable support plate and pass beyond said plate to externally receive the heat-shrinkable annular band.